Mat-Su Moniter

December 2011

Theres No Business Like Show Business

By Robert Rootes

"It's an exciting time to be on campus" at Matanuska-Susitna College, says Campus Director, Dr. Talis Colberg.

The water tank project is under way on the north side of campus for the City of Palmer. The expansion of Snodgrass Hall to accommodate facility offices and for the broadening of the nursing and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) programs is in the planning stage. But these projects seem to pale in comparison to the recent news of the Mat-Su College Theater (to be named at a later date).

Director Colberg says the approval for a $20 million dollar bond to build the theater allows Mat-Su College to move forward immediately on the plans. Still in the graphic stages, the new theater will be visible from College Road upon entering the campus off Trunk Road. The preliminary designs for the footprint plan will need some refining, but overall, everyone is pleased with the outcome.

Colberg says the college looked at the possibility of investors for the project; however, more seating meant more money and further delays in production. The overall $20 Million Bond wouldn't see its full potential with outside investors.

Kumin Associates, Inc. of Anchorage says that they are confident that their planners and architects for exterior and interior designs can

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Literacy amongst American Children

By Gary Haag

Wake up America, "We have a problem, Houston." American children have a serious problem when it comes to reading. According to the statistics website statemaster.com, Alaska scores 42nd out of 50 states and the District of Columbia in assessments for 4th grade reading.

Alaska Department of Education (DOE) reports a total of 22% of 4th graders are far below proficiency and only 68% of Alaskan students go on to graduate. According to the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 44% of American 4th grade students cannot read fluently.

Since 1983, more than 10 million Americans reached the 12th grade

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Aquatic Storage Endeavors

By Robert Rootes

With the conclusion of the Trunk Road Project, the next significant step to modernizing Palmer is the South West Utility Extension Program. Although the completion date for a water tank is not in the foreseeable future, according to Thomas E. Cohenour, Director of Public Works for the City of Palmer, the project will begin as early as January.

The City of Palmer has purchased 5 acres of forested land on the north side of the Mat-Su College. The land will house Reservoir 4 and Boosting Pumping Station. David Lundin, Project Engineer with HDL Hattenburg Dilley & Linnell Engineering Consultants says that Phase I will begin in the spring of 2012. By January the first of two widely publicized bids for the horizontal earth works will be available. Lundin states that clear cutting will encompass the majority of the north face ridge.

In part of the reservoir project, Mat-Su College will have a north campus access road branch. The reservoir entrance will be an annex from the proposed new north campus road. The secured annex ancillary road will lead to the 1 million gallon water tank and booster pumping station. The water tank will be 40 feet high with a circumference of 75 feet. The vertical structure will be mounted on a concrete

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Mat-Su College Arctic Dragons

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The Mat-Su Monitor

The Student Newspaper of Matanuska- Susitna College

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Benefits to advertising in the Mat-Su Monitor

- Advertising in the Monitor is VERY inexpensive.
- Approximately 5000 copies of the Monitor are distributed as an insert in the Valley Frontiersman.
- Approximately 1000 copies are distributed for free around the Mat-Su College campus and around the community in coffee shops and other such venues.

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Literacy

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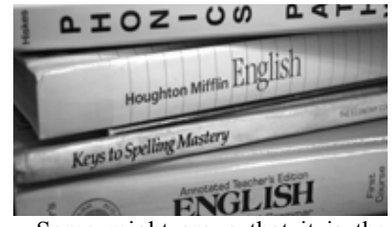
without having learned to read at a basic level. In the same period, more than 6 million Americans dropped out of high school altogether.

Among America's 12th and 8th graders, 26% cannot read at the basic level. In California, 33% of children will not finish high school. Most disturbing of all, 85% of juveniles who come before the courts are functionally illiterate. But why do so many children have problems reading? One of the causes can be traced to environmental conditions.

One reason for illiteracy among children is the child's environment. For example, where a child lives and his or her economic conditions play a big role. Most illiterate children in poor areas are being raised by a single parent, and single parents are often too busy working to teach their children the necessary skills.



Some might argue that it is the schools' place to teach children to read, but out-of-school reading habits of students are important. Research has shown that even 15 minutes a day of independent reading can expose students to more than a million words of text in a year.

Moreover, if parents can't read, there's a good chance children will be poor readers as well. A final factor is that children who live in poor neighborhoods are more likely to be under peer pressure and are much more likely to be influenced by their peers' bad learning habits rather than develop their own good habits.

The effects of illiteracy on America's children are heartbreaking. These children are treated differently. At school, the teacher will call on them to read out loud. This is a humiliating experience for children who can't read.

On the playground, other children call them dummy and retard. This has a major effect on the children's self-esteem; illiterate children will often become withdrawn, depressed, and lethargic. In extreme cases, they may even become suicidal.

Illiterate children, through no fault of their own, can be a danger to themselves and others. These children are unable to read medicine labels, phone numbers, street signs, and directions on any number of things.

Illiterate children are less likely to further their education and find work. Approximately 50% of the nation's unemployed youth age 16-21 are functionally illiterate, with virtually no prospects of obtaining good jobs. The educational careers of 25 to 40% of American children are imperiled because they don't read well enough, quickly enough, or easily enough. American children: they are our children; they are the true and saddest casualties of this problem.

There are no winners when it comes to illiteracy among America's children. In fact, 60% of America's inmates are illiterate, and to determine how many prison beds will be needed in future years, some states actually base part of their projection on how well current elementary students are performing on reading test. Thus, what happens to children who do not learn to read may affect them the rest of their lives. The causes for illiteracy in American children are situational environmental conditions.

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Education

Continued from page 2

may affect them the rest of their lives. The causes for illiteracy in American children are situational environmental conditions.

There is good news: some of these causes can be changed. The fight against illiteracy is a constant battle. Activists are working to strengthen literacy education among young people and adults. It is time to join the fight, there are numerous organizations that accept volunteers and donations. Prevent illiteracy by encouraging a young person in your life to read. Enroll them in a book-of-the-month club or buy them a book they will enjoy reading. In short, do your part. The fight against illiteracy is important. Continuing to ignore what is becoming a growing epidemic, will set our entire country up for failure.

Water Tank

Continued from page 1

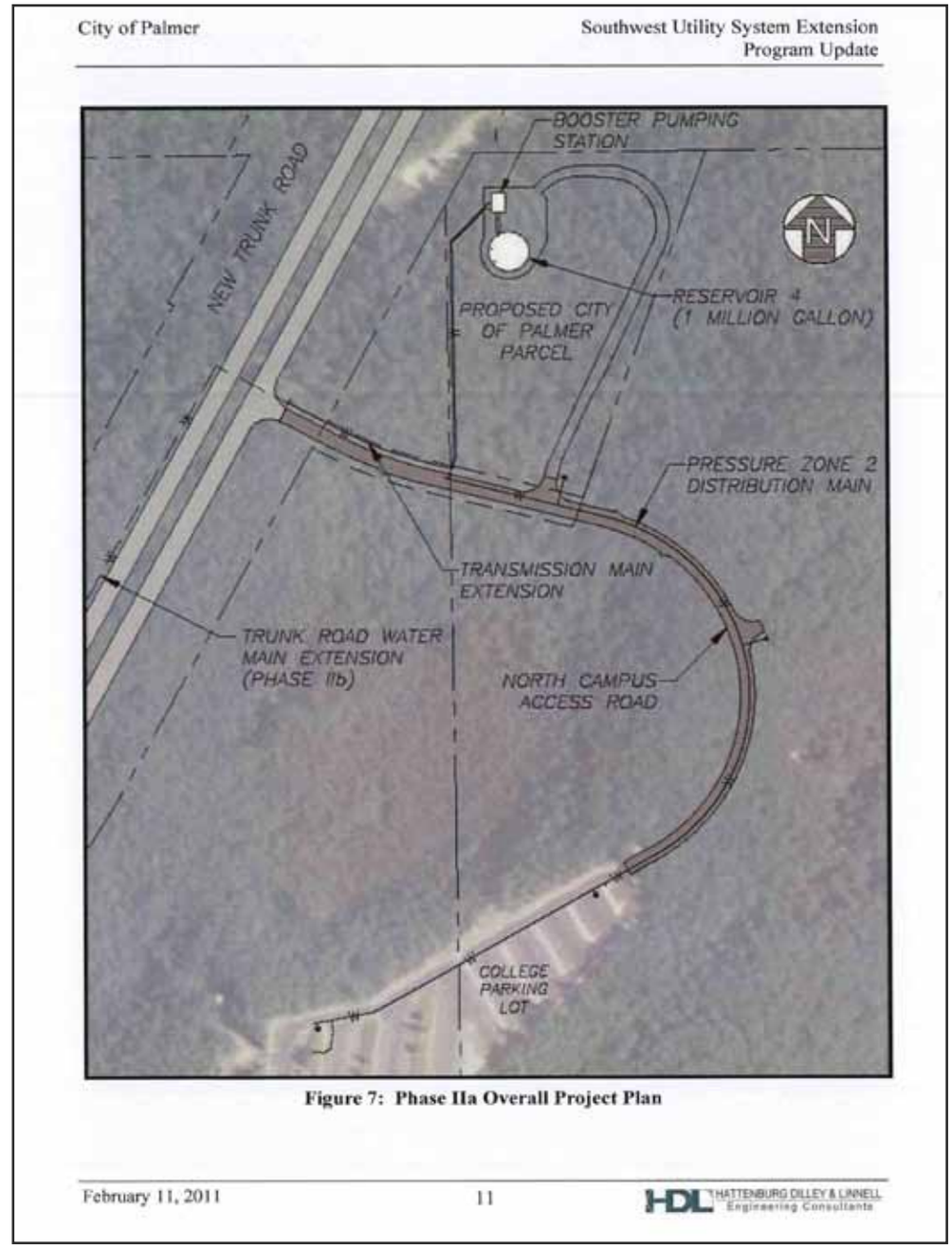
slab. One million gallons of water is the equivalent of 3.069 acres and 133,685.64 cubic feet.

Lundin says that the new reservoir tank will work in conjunction with the current water shed flow. According to Lundin there are at least two aquifers in the Palmer area. An aquifer is an underground layer of permeable gravel, sediment, or sand in which groundwater can be successfully extracted. Currently, Palmer draws city water from three existing wells. The new reservoir will eventually tie into a bigger water loop. Confident with a virtually unlimited water supply drawing from the Matanuska River, city water will only need chlorination for purification and filtration for public use.

The water tank will not be exclusionary according to Lundin. Existing homes on the water loop will not have to make changes. Currently, the majority of the commercial buildings and homes in Palmer are on the city's water supply. Anyone has a right to connect to the public water supply at their own expense. New developments and future subdivisions will need licensed and bonded contractors to connect to the backbone infrastructure water pipe lines. Presently water users are metered with fixed rates to certain amounts with additional charges per step after that. Periodically the city performs rate studies and adjusts rates as needed.

Lundin explained the tank reservoir will be constructed of prefabricated welded steel. Insulated against the ambient air temperature, Lundin says the groundwater coming into the tank at 40° F will not freeze due to the sheer volume as well as the circulation. Cohenour and Lundin agree that the benefits of the second storage reservoir will assist in maintenance endeavors. If one reservoir is shut down, the other tank will continue to supply residential needs. In case of a catastrophic event, if one of the water lines is severed, the tanks will serve for emergency stores.

Conscious of aesthetics, trees will be saved if possible; however, the 1 million gallon water tank will be seen from Trunk Road. Included with the project bidding process, contractors will be required to contract an artist with qualifications for mural painting on water storage tanks. The necessity of the water storage tank can be obscured with the proper mural work. The City of Palmer will have final say to the graphic design on the exterior of the tank. The object of the mural will be to camouflage the tank instead of another manmade constructed eyesore.



Proposed location for a new water tank near Mat-Su College. The tank would hold one million gallons of chlorinated water drawn from the Matanuska River.

Student Government Needs YOU!

By Denise Reeve

Where are you on Wednesdays from 11:50am to 1pm? Do you have an hour and ten minutes you could spare for your student government?

Matanuska-Susitna College Student Government has openings for club representatives and senator positions for civic-minded people willing to work to make the campus experience more fun and interesting.

Do you have ideas and friends who want to make something new and fabulous happen right here on our campus? Student Government activities may just be the opportunity for you!

Becoming a senator or club representative is easy, just show up and bring your ideas (and your friends) with you! Once you have observed three consecutive meetings you are eligible to be voted in by the council.

By getting involved you not only change your college experience but it looks great on your resume when you go job seeking. Senators and representatives work together to create activities and benefits for all of the student body at large.

The student government experience offers opportunities to learn leadership, teamwork, and communication skills that will help you in your future career choice. Being involved and helping make decisions with the group can be very empowering. In addition to all of these reasons, participating in student government can be fun.

Here are just a few of the events student government has accomplished in the past: the student appreciation barbecue each semester, finals week snacks and activities, holiday decorating and events, and assisting with graduation preparations.

Here is a list of student clubs and associations available on the Mat-Su campus:

-Math Club
-MSC Arctic Dragons Basketball Team
-Mat-Su Metal smith METL HEDZ
-College Students for Christ
-Team Art
-Mat-Su Carbon Crew
-MSC Paramedics Association
-Vet Assist Club
-Mat-Su Monitor (Newspaper)
-Gay-Straight Alliance
-Japanese Culture Club
-Medical/Nutrition Club
-Veterans Club
-Dance Appreciation Club

Participation in clubs and student government helps you to meet new people, make new friends, and network with other movers & shakers here at Mat-Su College.

The Mat-Su Monitor Wants You!

If you would like an outlet for your writing look no further!
The Mat-Su Monitor is looking for writers who would like to see their work published!

For more information about how you can get involved in the
Mat-Su Monitor, contact Dr. Pete Praetorius.

matsumonitor@gmail.com

Congratulations 2011-2012 Snodgrass Scholorship Recipients

Lisa Bell
Tonja Crafton
Calley Dehn
Craig Dollerhide
Zachariah Fisher
Linda Gangstad
Amber Gardiner
Trevor Harings
Haley Hester
Leslie Jerue
David Johnson
Jamie Keller
Laurie Lashlee
Morgan Macconaugha
Jennifer Martin
Jenny Mason
Mackenzie Merrill
Taylor Miner
Chad Petrie
Stephanie Stewart
Sandy Wilder

Heavy Metal Noise in FSM 208

By Denise Reeve

Evenings on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays upstairs in the Fred & Sarah Machetanz building (FSM) room 208 is just, well, NOISY. Casey Apling and Jen Brown, the metal smith adjunct professors, are teaching the nuances of the their craft to a new group and a few really loyal old students.

There is a reason no classes are scheduled near to FSM 208 during these times. Working in metal is a very interesting art form. To form metal you often have to hit it with a hammer, on an anvil or a form. This tends to be very therapeutic and again noisy!

Once metal has been beat a few times or even tapped with a hammer, to avoid breaking it, it has to be annealed (heated with an acetylene torch) to reorganize the crystalline structure and make it soft enough to work again. Drilling, sanding, and cutting all require annealing after a period of time.

The torches are not quiet either. A student learning to light a torch for the first time has to muster a little bit of courage, turn the gas on, squeeze the striker to make sparks, and with a loud sound (sort of like a bold pop) the torch is lit. Turning off the torch for a novice can be scary as well, if you don't boldly turn off the gas quickly, the torch can make a suction like sound and blow itself out with an even louder (slightly disturbing) pop. This is all just part of learning to master the use of an acetylene torch, an absolutely necessary skill to a metal smith. This skill can be learned in the beginning metal smith class currently on Tuesday and Thursday evenings.

The beginning metal smith class also teaches proper use of tools, safety, cutting, fabricating, joining, and soldering metal to make jewelry or art objects. There has been so much interest in this class there will be two beginning metal smith classes in the spring, including a repeat of the Friday morning 9am-230pm class, and for the first time at Mat Su College, there will be an intermediate metal smith class (I will be in that one) in the Fall.

The Friday afternoon/evening class teaches casting for Jewelry (also known as lost wax casting), I am always registered for this class (no matter what, this one is my personal favorite).

This class requires the student to learn to carve, mold, or fabricate designs out of wax, make investment molds of their piece, heat the mold to burn out the wax, and then melt (utilizing a bigger oxygen and acetylene torch system, very loud) and pour molten metal into the heated mold (utilizing a vacuum casting machine, yep it's loud too).

The hot mold is then dipped carefully in and out of water to blow out the investment (not too noisy, but messy) and carefully retrieve the metal object made from the mold. This class came to Mat Su College at the request of professor Apling and (not surprisingly) a group of loyal

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Theatre

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utilize the $20 million to its fullest potential. Director Colberg has preliminary interior blueprints for the theater that can accommodate over 500 seats. The modern exterior proposal will have aesthetically pleasing landscaping and generally grand architectural designs. Conscious of the rural aspect Mat-Su College offers, Colberg rests easy knowing when the theater plans are implemented the campus won't lose its forests to poor intent.

Colberg hopes Mat-Su College will receive recognition from Tree Campus USA from the Arbor Day Foundation by meeting the 5 standards criteria needed to promote healthy trees through student involvement. When the construction begins for the college theater by 2014, Mat-Su College will still boast a healthy urban forest surrounding the college campus.

Construction of the new theatre is scheduled to begin in 2014

Currently, the majority of the educational endeavors for the campus take place in four buildings occupying a 102,678 square feet. The new theater will expand on current opportunities with 2 classrooms planned to encompass the space under the 500+ seat auditorium.

Colberg says the theater will allow the campus to invite serious lectures as well as aid in new student orientation. Currently there is no location on campus to have efficient meetings for the 200+ staff and faculty at the college. The multimedia opportunities for the theater are limitless. From college drama productions and private functions, to bringing in chorus and band space, students will have more prospects than ever before offered at Mat-Su College.

In addition to the new building, there might also be a need to expand on the parking lot space to accommodate the new theater; however, at the moment, Colberg is confident that the majority of lectures and entertainment presentations will be held on the weekends when the main campus would be closed.

In the foreseeable future, there won't be a particular significant increase in staffing. Colberg says a theater manager and technician will certainly be needed. On staff currently, Grant Olsen has the experience needed to cultivate the Fine Arts programs for the new theater. Colberg says students will have many volunteer opportunities to gain experience in theater aspects once the doors open.

Over the next three years the campus will see some exciting changes. Expanding Snodgrass will increase the nursing and EMT programs while the Palmer Water Tank Project will put the campus on the city water infrastructure. The theater will move Mat-Su College out of the secondary education shadow and, Colberg says, student alumni will look back on fond memories of a standard campus.

The new theater is embraced by UAA Mat-Su College and openly endorsed by the Valley Performing Arts Center in Wasilla. VPA sees the new theater not as a threat to their current schedules but an expansion of the live arts in the Matanuska Valley. The Mat-Su Valley is still a vibrant and growing community in Alaska.

Organized choices and intelligent plnning will secure the Valley's future investment endeavors, making it one of the most scenic and accommodating places to live in Alaska.

It's That Time Again...

By Robert Rootes

Ah, November, frost, wind, the smell of Thanksgiving, and the time for admission and enrollment at University of Alaska Mat-Su College. Sandra Gravley, Director of Student Services at Mat-Su, says admissions are strong for the spring semester.

Applications fees are $40.00 and Mat-Su College is able to accept applications anytime before the semester begins. Gravley encourages students to apply early, at least a month before classes start. That deadline also applies to transfer students.

"Testing is not required for admission purposes, but any student who takes an English or math class will need placement. Placement can be based on prior coursework (prerequisite classes, for instance MATH A105 is a prerequisite for MATH A107) or SAT, ACT, or Accuplacer scores. We give the Accuplacer here for $15.00," says Gravley. Prerequisites are required at Mat-Su College.

New classes are offered when demand calls for them. Recently the Office of Academic Affairs added a class in Japanese language skills.

"Mat-Su College is an open admission college. This means that eligible applicants (those who completed high school or equivalent) will be admitted either to an Associate of Arts or the major of their choice. Some majors are limited to a certain number of applicants every year, and others have extra requirements that need to be met before advancing to full major status

Paramedic Tech is an example of a major that is limited and therefore competitive. CST requires students to have computer skills before being accepted into the program. Students going into those programs often apply to an AA and take coursework that will prepare them for the major," says Gravley. "Students who were academically disqualified in the past are considered ineligible for admission. Those students must apply as non-degree-seeking students and complete 12 credits successfully before being readmitted."

It's important to make an appointment with an academic advisor in Student Services. Freshmen or transfer students ready to move onto a bachelor's degree can use advisors to guide them accordingly with course choices. Advisors can also let students know the best way to continue their education or when changing majors.

Students with or without a GED are eligible for admission. However, students without a GED will need to take the Acuplacer and "qualify under 'ability-to-benefit' equivalency set down by the federal government," Gravely said.

High school students are able to attend college if they meet certain requirements. High school students interested in enrolling in college courses early should

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Outstanding Student Highlight

By Ahriel Porter

It is important that everybody has a dream: a goal to work towards, a purpose to drive forward. Can you remember what you first wanted to be when you were a child, dreaming of adulthood?

At age five, Kati Miles discovered her dream. "When I was five years old I was given my first Bible. All I could think about was how happy it made me feel…" Miles said that she felt mature, like she was given an important task. "All I wanted to do after that was give children around the world that same feeling."

After graduating from the Tech school in Wasilla, Miles became a full time CNA at Primrose Retirement Home. She decided to become the first girl in her family to pursue her education and was soon a full time student at Matanuska Susitna College as well.

Kati was determined to become a nurse and travel to Africa where she could help others. After her first year of school an opportunity crossed her path. One that would either put a stop to her career, or feed her starving dream. Miles was offered a job as a teacher in Africa. It was only for three months, but she could not turn it down.

She quit her job, quit school, and bought a ticket. "I'd dreamt of Africa, I knew I had to go. I knew it was going to be my home one day, I could feel it." The risks were high, she had only the money she had saved from her year of work and she knew the consequences.

Soon after her decision, Miles said goodbye to her family and friends. Then, she was gone. "When I first stepped onto African soil, all I could think about was how cold it was." Despite a slight culture shock, Miles adjusted quickly. "We were always required to wear skirts, and we weren't aloud to show our knees. It was so different from America, but I loved it."

Miles described her time with her students as priceless. She loved teaching them, guiding them through their first steps of life. "I remember one time, a little girl asked me if snow would kill her." Three months passed in a blink of an eye, and soon she was back in Alaska.

Outstanding Mat-Su College student Kati Miles worked as a teacher for three months in Africa

Picking up the slack from her trip, Miles worked two jobs while studying at the community college. Catching up with school, she is now more determined than ever. "I always think of my kids. I miss them so much. All I can think about is graduating so I can get back to them."

Miles keeps in touch with her fellow teachers and plans on returning to Africa on a permanent basis. "I understand it was a lot to risk, but I found my passion. I plan on doing everything I can to live it."

Faculty Position Available!
Assistant Professor of Mathematics

Matanuska-Susitna College is currently seeking a fulltime term faculty member to teach in the Mathematics department for the Spring or Fall 2012. Start date will be based on the availability of the final candidate and/or the needs of the college.

Apply to www.UAKJobs.com (posting # 0062657) today!

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http://matsu.alaska.edu/office/human-resource-services-3/

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Dance Appreciation and Awareness

By William Scott

Hello, my name is William Scott; I am introducing a new club called the Dance Appreciation and Awareness club. Learning or knowing how to dance is not a requirement to join DAAC; however it is encouraged.

The purpose of this club is to spread knowledge of dance among the students and guests alike, not only the know-how but the history of dances as well. Furthermore, we the DAAC wish to hold dances for the school in the future, and as such, experienced dancers are needed as this would speed up the timeline we could accomplish this goal.

Back to the topic at hand, DAAC is open to any and all students enrolled in three or more credit hours that are in good academic standing. The benefits of joining are: you get to have a fun time, hang out with really cool people, and learn something you did not pay for. For example, we plan to host a movie night, fundraisers, informative meetings about dance, and other events.

So far, DAAC only has a few members, but hopes to increase this number before the end of the semester. Also if you go onto Facebook and search the groups you will find our group and any updates pertaining to us.

To join, simply e-mail me at Hillbilly747@live.com, and then start showing up at the meetings. After Friday the 28th Oct our meeting day/days will be shown on our group page. To recap, we are a new club that needs members, and our purpose is to spread dance.

Metal

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(loud) vocal students who requested the class to learn new metal smith skills, which with Professor Suzanne Bach's assistance became a reality.

Finishing pieces from both classes requires power tools to grind, file, drill, and/or polish the metal. I am assuming you guessed by now those tools and actions are all just a bit noisy.

The noise is a necessary part of learning such an interesting craft. School and life can often be trying (even frustrating) and art classes like the metal smith classes give students a creative (albeit noisy) outlet for these frustrations.

Working in metal is an addicting art form; creativity is good for the soul, to be creative in the metal smith craft requires learning the skills, practicing these skills, and honing craftsmanship over time. I personally have taken these classes for nine semesters and I still feel I learn something new from every class.

If any of this interests you, the Mat Su METL HEDZ (metal smith club) invite you to wander into FSM 208 during any of the scheduled class times to come and see for yourself what metal smithing is all about. If you are interested in seeing the art being created in these classes, there will be a (first ever held) Juried Metal Art Show the week of December 4th in the Machetanz Art Gallery upstairs in the FSM building.

As President of the METL HEDZ, I invite you to join me and the other metal smith students, to take one or more of these classes, and explore this addicting (Yes it's LOUD) art form. For those of you with classes near FSM 208, feel free to wander in on your break and see what causes the HEAVY METAL NOISE!

Mat-Su Monitor

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PostSecret: Mat-Su College Style

By Jake Magoon

Much to my simultaneous horror and delight, a dear old friend of mine, Jacquelyn Frenzl, inadvertently introduced me to PostSecret over the summer: horror to have been ignorant of its existence for so long, and delight at its discovery.

PostSecret is a blog (the largest advertisement-free blog in the world) which exists as a medium for anyone who wishes to confess their secrets to the world. Not solely a repository of guilt, PostSecret allows for all of the delicate, simple (and sometimes not so simple), honest truths about our lives to be shared and expressed anonymously. Many people find, me included, that reading the heartfelt truths of our fellow secretly passionate human beings makes us realize just how similar our secret hopes really are.

Embracing the notions of cooperation, connection, and understanding as Good Things®, a thought struck me earlier this semester, one which was met with universal excitement and agreement: Why not bring this idea to the Mat-Su college community?

As a result, next semester there shall exist an anonymous drop box which will serve as a means by which to share anything: from the fact that you feel badly for that time you lied to your teacher in 4th grade, to your preference for even numbers, to your innermost feelings about life. These submissions will be posted to a Mat-Su PostSecret website, and some of the submissions will be run in an ongoing PostSecret column here in the monitor.

I understand that such submissions, even when anonymous, are not always easy. To help set an example, a large handful of brave individuals familiar with PostSecret submitted confessions to the Monitor via paper and an envelope. I still have no hint as to where the confessions originated, and made sure to get an equal amount of male and female submissions for this first test run (in the future, the drop box will remove all chance of discovery). Does any of this sound like you?

"I'm 20 years old and I've never kissed a girl. I'm told that I'm cute, but I can't get over being terrified, and boys aren't supposed to be scared. I don't want to be alone forever and hope things change soon." [you won't be, they will]

"My mother just lost her job. She tells everyone it's because her boss had a vendetta against her, but I know she's really just an alcoholic."

"I've been in love with my best friend for almost a year now. She feels similarly, but circumstance says we can't even discuss it, let alone try being together. That's okay, our eyes say we know, and her smile soothes my whole world."

"Just because I'm a girl doesn't mean it doesn't hurt when my best friend and I fight, even if you think it is stupid drama. It just means no one takes me seriously."

"I make sure each of the available colors of gummy fruit snack in a packet has an equal quantity via eating the odd ones first before I munch them all at once, and I am not ashamed to admit that. OCD represent."

Phi Theta Kappa Fundraiser Event

By Denise Reeve

The Beta Sigma Epsilon chapter of the Phi Theta Kappa International Honor Society is gearing up for the 2nd Annual Speaker/ Fundraiser Dinner. Last year Iditarod top finisher Dee Dee Jonroe regaled attendees with her personal story and her quest for excellence in her life. The event last year was a huge success, and the members of Phi Theta Kappa are hoping to meet or exceed that success with the 2012 event.

Although the speaker is still a secret, the donation collection efforts have just begun. Do you have something special; artwork, crafts, or collectibles that you no longer have room for? Are you an artist that would like to be better recognized in the local community? Did you receive a gift that would be better off with someone else? Does your business have inventory that by donating would lessen the amount you have to pay in year-end taxes?

Donating to Phi Theta Kappa is a tax deduction; our chapter is a non-profit and would welcome any of these items to auction off at our annual event in March. Funds raised by Phi Theta Kappa will be used for scholarship opportunities, recognition of student excellence, and assist with funding opportunities for student scholar travel events.

If you wish to donate something please contact Denise Reeve (PTK donation committee) at 907-357-0022; be sure to leave your contact information when you leave a message. All donors will be honored in the program and the Mat-Su College Phi Theta Kappa (Beta Sigma Epsilon) members thank you for your support.

Admissions

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consider strong fundamentals in math, science, English, and social studies. Career choices made in high school can help with the transition from early education to college. Students with less than average high school grades are still eligible for college; however, they may need further prerequisites in their first semester(s) to prepare for college.

Both SAT and ACT are accepted at Mat-Su for placement. Student who are Alaska residents have lower tuition rates than non-residents, who pay as much as three-times the amount of tuition as do residents.

When students apply for admission and are unable to fund the classes, the college can sometimes postpone enrollment for a year. Scholarships can be use to offset financial obligations such as transportation or rent. Scholarships are given on funding bases. Most people that apply for college at Mat-Su are admitted. However, there are no guarantees.

Currently there are several scholarships available for students at Mat-Su College. "Students are eligible for UAA or UA scholarships," says Gravley. "Our financial aid page has links to lots of information on scholarships. Korry Dunham is the financial aid officer, and she has a packet that guides students through the process."

Anyone interested in scholarship programs or admission to UAA Mat-Su College can go to Student Services or access the Mat-Su College website. The deadline for scholarships is February. Mat-Su College is a great place to be for education and diverse experiences. Check out the college website (www.matsu.alaska.edu) or stop into the Student Services at Mat-Su College for questions and get a jump on your education.

Book Review: The Politics of Experience

By Jake Magoon

"This book attempts to document some forms of our contemporary violation of ourselves." – So ends the introduction to R.D. Laing's adrenaline fueled thought provoking masterpiece, "The Politics of Experience."

Laing, a Scottish Philosopher and Psychotherapist, became the youngest Consultant (senior medical position) in Britain in 1953 at Gartnavel Royal Hospital. With his background in medicine combined with opportunity and individual proclivity, Laing would go on to write his masterpiece about the nature of the experience of our existence in this world as an experiencing creature, and (along with many highly-respected run-on sentences) ultimately puts forth the message the similarity of we people to one another.

Do not be fooled: by saying "politics", Laing does not refer to that which our common usage of the word refers, the discussion of which is so understandably shunned in polite circles today as a result of its corrupting and facile nature. Rather, Laing means, at the outset, to describe the way certain commonalities of experience function, the manner (much of it dealing with subject-object relations) in which experience works.

Phrased differently, Laing says, "Nevertheless, the requirement of the present, the failure of the past, is the same: to provide a thoroughly self-conscious and self-critical human account of man."

What makes this book so absolutely gripping, other than his playful writing style, is the dashing way it slices through much of the deep fog which we think separates us from one another. From the time we are small, we learn to develop defense mechanisms…on the playground, at home, in ways which protect our developing psyche.

We grow, become situated in our environment, and become encultured to fear and to hate. Throughout much of life, why "everyone else" cannot see things from our, usually correct (or so we believe), point of view remains a mystery. Meanwhile, war, poverty, conflict, and abuse continue. Laing dares pose the question as to whether the perfectly adjusted normal man, ready to launch a nuclear weapon at any moment, is more sane and less dangerous than the well-intentioned psychotic who believes they are harboring a nuclear weapon in their stomach.

The lesson of this book is ultimately one of recapturing the ultimate potential of human freedom. The fact is, systems we dislike, or which are unjust, cannot function without all of our participation. If we simply stop doing as we are told, and do not allow ourselves to become absurd enough to launch those metaphorical nuclear weapons, we may yet one day realize that the destiny of this world is ours to shape.

Truth and love is as much an inevitable part of human nature as are supposedly greed and self-interest. The lie of our irreconcilable differences, from each other, and from ourselves, is used to perpetuate the ways in which we exploit one another. Despite this, cooperation is more than possible; it is essential.

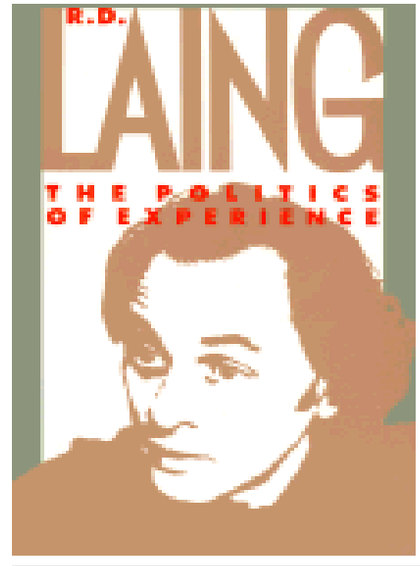
Beyond even our relationship with one another, Laing sets out to attempt to help us reconcile out our relationship with ourselves. Or, as he puts it, "The Life I am trying to grasp is the me that is trying to grasp it." Read this book. Read it for yourself, for everyone you love, and to help us all understand: there is no enemy.

Play Review: A Christmas Carol

By Ahriel Porter

As snow lightly falls upon the valley, so does the magic of Christmas spirit. Tis the season for a classic! It seems as though "A Christmas Carol" by Charles Dickens has been portrayed in every way imaginable. However, if you read the book you'll know that it is hard to find such a traditional version as performed by the Valley Performing Arts.

Jack Foster, director of the play, mentioned that he chose a unique view on the production based on John Jake's take on the tale "…Because it presents a unique angle- the author actually performing and reading of his story". Charles Dickens himself reads you one of his most popular fictions and even participates in the performance. John Fremin, who plays Dickens, offers an extraordinary presentation of one of our favorite holiday traditions as he reads and interacts with the characters.



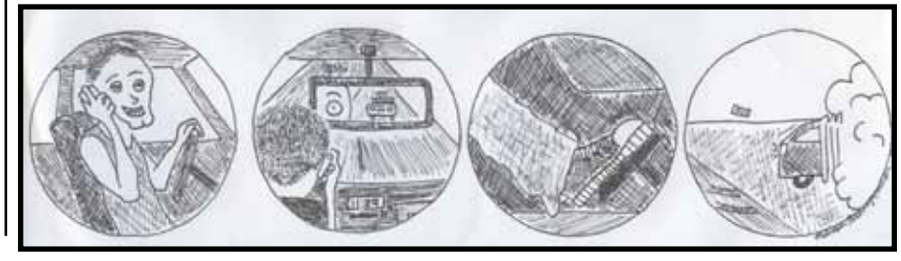
As the audience is brought back in time, into such a familiar story it is easy to compare our favorite characters with those acting on Family Network or the Hallmark Channel. Unfortunately for the big TV programs, those movies have nothing on the actors and actresses of VPA.

Kevin Cochran displays the ideal Ebenezer Scrooge with his character's rotten attitude polluting his neighbors and coworkers; his frightening experience with the unwelcomed spirits of Christmas past, present and future; and the heart warming transformation he finally makes at the end of the play.

I could go on and on about such wonderful actors making one of my favorite stories come to life: sweet Belle, played by Greta Kopperud; Ebenezer, Bobby, and Old Joe, all played by Johnny Foster; the kind Bob Cratchit played by Theron Bair; and of course courageous Tiny Tim played by Andrew Mattson. But I would like to single out Miss Hannah Rodolph, who showed an, and there's no other way to say it, outstanding performance of Fan, Ebenezer's sister.

I have to say that there is nothing like watching a classic live. If nothing else, the play definitely gets you in the merry spirit of Christmas. I would not expect less from the VPA. The play's large crew, and even larger cast came together to produce a timeless classic everyone can appreciate and love.

Nick Nook by Melissa Gianopoulos



Holiday Recipes

By Hattie Schmidtkunz

The holiday season is upon us! Thanksgiving marks the beginning of a flurry of cooking, decoration, gift exchange and parties. Homemade gifts are always the best, especially edible ones.

Here are a few of my favorite Christmas recipes that make wonderful gifts or just treats for your family. These recipes come from the 1952 edition of Wisconsin Electric Power Company's "Christmas Cookies" recipe book. My grandfather worked for the company and got a new recipe book every year. From this recipe book, my grandmother made many lovely deserts for my father when he was a boy.

The inside cover reminds chefs of the time to "Be modern, cook electrically"

Chocolate Snowflakes (Refrigerator Cookies)

-1 cup flour
-1 tsp baking powder
-1/4 tsp salt
-2 squares unsweetened chocolate
-1/4 cup butter
-1 cup sugar
-2 eggs
-1 tsp vanilla
-1 cup finely chopped nuts
-powdered sugar

1)Mix flour, baking soda and salt
2)Melt chocolate and butter in sauce pan over low heat, stir in sugar
3)Pour melted chocolate mix into mixing bowl (separate from flour mix) and add eggs, vanilla, beat well
4)Add flour, chopped nuts, blend well
5)Chill 4-5 hours, or until dough is firm
6) Roll dough into golf-ball size balls, roll in powdered sugar
7)Place 2 inches apart on greased cookie sheet. Bake for 7-10 minutes at 350 degrees
8) Put in a plastic bag or sealed container as soon as they are cooled enough to handle so they don't dry out

Oatmeal Date Squares

-1 3/4 cups oatmeal
-1 1/2 cups flour
-1 cup packed brown sugar
-1 tsp baking soda
-1/2 tsp salt
-3/4 cup butter

1)Mix ingredients and work in butter thoroughly
2)Pack half the mixture in the bottom of a greased 8 1/2" X 12" glass pan
3)Cover with date filling

Date Filling:
-3/4 lb pitted dates, chopped
-1/2 cup sugar
-1/8 tsp salt
-1/2 cup water
-2 tablespoons lemon juice
-1/2 cup nuts, finely chopped

4)Boil dates, sugar, salt and water until thick. Allow to cool, add lemon juice and chopped nuts
5)Put date mixture over oatmeal mixture in glass pan
6)Add remaining oatmeal mixture over dates, pressing it down well
7)Bake 40 minutes at 350 degrees, cut into squares while hot
8)Store in a sealed container

Ginger Snaps

-3/4 cup butter
-1 cup sugar
-1/4 cup molasses
-1 egg
-2 cups flour
-1/2 tsp salt
-2 tsp baking soda
-1 tsp cinnamon
-1 tsp ginger
-3 tablespoons sugar

1)Cream butter, gradually add sugar and molasses. Cream well.
2)Add egg, beat well
3)In a separate bowl mix flour, salt, baking soda, cinnamon, cloves and ginger
4)Combine wet and dry ingredients
5)Roll dough into walnut sized balls and roll in sugar
6)Place 2 inches apart on greased cookie sheet.
5)Flatten cookies slightly with a fork
7)Bake 15-20 minutes at 350 degrees, makes 4 dozen
8) Put in a plastic bag or sealed container as soon as they are cooled enough to handle so they don't dry out

The chocolate snowflakes and ginger snaps have quite a long shelf life and will last several months in a sealed container, while the oatmeal date squares, also stored in a container, should be eaten within a month of baking them. It's especially important to put the chocolate snowflakes in a sealed container as soon as possible,since they can get really dried out and hard.

The oatmeal date squares are incredibly delicious and are healthier than the cookies. The ginger snaps, of course, are excellent with a cold glass of milk.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

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